



CAUX SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Transforming conflict – from the personal to the global



2009 REPORT

“The people I have met, the conversations I have had, our classes, and other outside adventures have made this journey unforgettable and forever impacting on me. The quiet reflection time has helped clarify many things for me, clear my head, and make personal what we have learned in class.”

A SAMPLE OF TOPICS COVERED

- Identity and Worldview
 - Conflict Analysis
- Cross-Cultural Conflict Transformation
- Strategizing for Change
- Peacebuilding Paradigms
 - Interfaith Dialogue
 - Victim Cycle, Path of Reconciliation
 - Trauma Recovery

“My eyes were opened to the fact that our cultural backgrounds play a big role in conflict. Our differences can exacerbate conflicts further, or understanding of the others’ culture can help solve conflicts.”

The 2009 Caux Scholars



In Louise Diamond’s model of “the heroic journey of conflict resolution,” the individual is inspired by their “source” to go on a “quest”. As they seek, they encounter a “test”, or perhaps many, which might prompt them to “freeze, fight, or flee.” A “shift” in perspective, attitude, or behavior, however, can often bring resolution and show the way through the test. This model of the heroic journey, presented by Michelle LeBaron as one framework for understanding conflict transformation at the beginning of the 2009 CSP, might serve as a metaphor for the 2009 scholars.

Their quest was and is to become effective peacebuilders in today’s world and perhaps to find hope and a path to pursue in relation to the conflicts with which they are intimately connected: in Sri Lanka, Moldova, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Turkey, Nigeria, Ghana, Germany and even in the

US and Canada. Their tests came in many forms: struggles to obtain visas, challenges raising money for tuition and/or travel, illness, bad backs, a chipped ankle bone, climbing the mountain to their temporary “home” in the Alpina Chalet during the Program’s first two weeks, or struggling up the Rochers de Naye in the pre-dawn darkness—a pretty stiff test for anyone who has not climbed a mountain before!

Despite their very diverse backgrounds and experiences, the ’09 scholars built community quickly during their first week, with Michelle LeBaron, from the University of British Columbia Law School as their teacher and guide. They learned about cultural fluency and how important it is to become aware of the many different starting points which people can have. Cultural fluency is “having multiple maps in your head—about being able to cross cultural boundaries in a way that helps you to think from the inside out.” Through group exercises and role playing, they thought about their own approaches to conflict and issues of identity. They also learned how different concepts of time, gender roles and power, or focus on task versus process and end results versus relationships can impact communications and fruitful dealing.

“Preventing catastrophic climate change needs the gritty reality of integrity . . . to help build sustainable economies based on ethical values and industries which seek to serve humanity and the communities we are part of.”



“I learned that peacebuilders need to be culturally sensitive, open, confident and also aware of themselves and their personal conflict/resolution styles.”



Caux Forum for Human Security



Academic Director Barry Hart and special intern Jenny Devlin, who is a Rotary

Peace Fellow in Japan, helped prepare the scholars for the Caux Forum for Human Security, a five-day conference at Mountain House in which they were full participants. The conference, focusing on some key causes of human insecurity around the world—the financial and economic crisis, climate change, bad governance, and clash issuing from cultural and religious differences—heard from panels of experts in these areas and discussants, who took the issues further. They also heard of steps being taken to address these issues in workshops, which followed the four main themes through the four days of the conference, and in change maker workshops, where individual initiatives were featured.

The scholars formed their own discussion group after the plenary each day and had the opportunity for follow up interaction with Rajmohan Gandhi, president of IofC International and Research Professor at the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; Angelina Teny, Sudan’s Minister for Energy and Mining; Paul Von Tongeran, Executive

Director of the European Centre for Conflict Prevention; and John Graham, President of the Giraffe Heroes Project and former US Foreign Service Officer. In the spirit of Caux, with its emphasis on service and care for individuals, they also helped prepare rooms for guests, staff the welcome desk, interview some conference attendees, and served coffee and tea to the conference on the evening that Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan gave the key note speech which opened the conference.



Two scholars were active participants in the workshop on climate change and contributed to the document offering its conclusions and plan of action. Along with everyone at the conference, which included an important group of over 40 from Pakistan and India, they had the opportunity to take part in a wonderful evening featuring Indian vocal music and dancing and an interview with Rajmohan Gandhi. He spoke about his grandfather Mahatma Gandhi’s attitudes towards Muslims and the founding of Pakistan—drawn from his recent award-winning biography, *Gandhi - The Man, His People and the Empire*.



Back To The Classroom

Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Professor of International Peace and Conflict Resolution at American University, reintegrated scholars in their classroom after their dispersal during the conference by eliciting their questions and drawing out lessons from the questions on the table. As a Palestinian who has spent time in Sri Lanka, Mindinao and other areas of conflict, he understood personally that “history is full of positive and negative realities. It is littered with conflict. Our task is to look at how we imagine the future.”



Dr. Abu-Nimer outlined an array of other responses that seem to be typical of

diverse religious encounters: one can deny the other completely and have an attitude of “my truth only;” one can minimize differences by stating that “all religions are the same;” one can respect different religious behavior, values and traditions; one can have a sense of empathy, where a Christian might fast during Ramadan, for instance; and even an attitude might grow where one feels comfortable with the other and able to criticize one’s own tradition. He provoked exchange that took students beyond a feeling of: “I don’t want to offend you, but . . .” to a deeper and honest questioning of each other.

John Katunga brought an African perspective to the final week, which focused on transitional justice. His warmth, stories, laughter and presence, firmly rooted in the love of his homeland, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which he as a human rights activist had to flee, had tremendous effect on listeners, according to one student. In various ways, Katunga highlighted the

preciousness and dignity of each person, and increasingly he continues to work for human dignity to be upheld. He advocates keeping a balance between



conscience and values and a never-ending demand for the proper implementation of the Declaration of Human Rights, which will help protect the individual.

Dr. Barry Hart, overseeing the learning throughout the course as CSP’s Academic Director, brought his extensive experience in West Africa and the Balkans to the classroom. He has been working for years to bring trauma healing to war-torn societies by building capacity for honor, respect, dignity and hope in those who have faced trauma. At the close of the course he led students in a series of exercises and talks in preparation for re-entry into their lives back home.

Jenny Devlin, a Rotary Peace Scholar, joined the staff of CSP as a special intern. She studied law at the University of Melbourne and has worked in cross-cultural and indigenous mediation in Australia. Remi Raidan, a Caux Scholar in 2007 from Lebanon, did a double concentration in International Relations and Comparative Politics at the University of Beirut and hopes to begin a Master’s Program in the near future. Joseph Walla majored in Political Science at the University of Minnesota and was a Truman Scholar in 2006 and a Luce Scholar in 2007. He was a Caux Scholar in 2004. CSP benefited from their experience and talent.



“The most inspiring skill that I’ve learned at CSP was having quiet time with myself. I try to find quiet time every day now and listen to my inner voice. I can certainly say that this makes me a much stronger person.”



“The more self-knowledge a person has, the better they will be able to assess an intercultural conflict as it is, not as how they imagine through the filter of their mind.”



“Really amazing spectrum in studying conflict; I have truly come away from this a different person.”



“Through my service at Mountain House I learned that we are ‘born to serve, not to be served.’ This inspired me to volunteer my time helping others.”



Outside the Classroom



The Caux Scholars also had many experiences outside of the classroom. For example they took a day trip to Geneva, where they toured the United Nations, were briefed at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) about their peacebuilding curriculum for UN officials, visited the International Red Cross Museum and had lunch at the Initiatives of Change office, where they heard David Atwood of the Quaker UN office speak about their work related to the issue of land mines.



They also enjoyed the music and robust crowds of the Montreaux Jazz festival, indulgence at the chocolate factory, Swiss culture at the bonfire celebrating Swiss National Day and had lessons on making cheese fondue for 40.

International talent shows and Scottish dancing evenings under the stars were another feature of Caux life, as were long conversations and dancing in the Caux Café, and meeting others attending conferences over meals or tea on the Mountain House terrace. Some students jumped aboard trains on free weekends to see other beautiful and notable spots.



One great aspect of the “learning community” at Mountain House is that everyone works together on the practical running of the conference center. Scholars became part of international teams who took on the tasks of gardening, housekeeping, vegetable preparation, cooking, and the after-meal washup, complete with the latest loud music.

Some of the moments the Scholars appreciated most were: discovering a waterfall hiking in the pre-dawn darkness for a mountaintop view of the sunrise, experiencing the sunsets over Lake Geneva, and coming upon a pasture ringing with the bells of Swiss cows.



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Initiatives of Change

The Caux Scholars Program (CSP) is a month-long academic program of the international organization Initiatives of Change. CSP is held in Caux, Switzerland, and brings together students from around the world to learn about the moral and spiritual dimensions of peacemaking and about the relationship between individual transformation and change in the world.